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LEARNING WITH HEMI-SYNC® A PILOT STUDY OF PAL IN SOUTH AFRICA

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The authors were introduced to Hemi-Sync® in 1992 through the GATEWAY EXPERIENCE® tapes and through marketing a self-improvement course incorporating Hemi-Sync locally. Both have experience in the human development field. Cedric van Heerden has completed undergraduate studies in business economics and industrial psychology and holds a master's degree in commerce. He has spent five years in research and development of psychological tests and the major part of his career as a personnel manager. He presently conducts a career counseling practice in Cape Town. Maati contributes a strong background in sales training and a special talent in interpersonal relations. Together, they conduct workshops using H-PLUS® and the Progressive Accelerated Learning (PAL) tapes from their base in Cape Town. The following paper was presented by Cedric van Heerden at the 1993 Professional Seminar and discusses observations and results based on initial testing of a study workshop incorporating PAL.

INTRODUCTION

From his work in career counseling, Cedric had firsthand experience of the problems that students experience, especially in the increasingly integrated classes. References to *PAL* in the Hemi-Sync literature, particularly in the work of Dr. Devon Edrington in the mid-80s, seemed worth exploring. Experience with the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) indicated a role for a Jungian temperament-style model as a foundation for using both the tapes and learning techniques.

Cedric and Maati first worked with *PAL* and *METAMUSIC®* tapes themselves. *Concentration*, *Catnapper*, and *Cloudscapes* were most effective, while results from *Retain*, *Recall*, *Release* were less specific. A private high school was persuaded to sponsor some of its students, and the pilot project started with a small sample of seven. The average age of the three girls and four boys was seventeen. The objective was to test whether or not insight into a variety of learning techniques and the use of two *Hemi-Sync* tapes at home would improve exam performance.

STRUCTURE OF THE PAL WORKSHOP

The structure of the workshop emerged from Cedric's career counseling experience. Students received indications of career choice based on perceptual skills and personality factors. Also, insight into stress, self-esteem, and goal setting was processed as a group. The need to

review career progress every two years was stressed, and students worked through a simple “recipe” for doing this. With *Hemi-Sync* providing the advantage of balancing the two hemispheres to create a new synthesis, both types of learning were addressed: left brain facts and right brain experiences. Maati’s innate sensitivity to the needs of young people resulted in a special rapport with them. This was a most rewarding aspect of the study. The role of an informed and interested party, other than a parent or teacher, cannot be overestimated. The work-shop time frame was four sessions of four hours each. This was found to be insufficient for covering exam and home stress, so two further sessions were organized for processing four *H-PLUS* Function exercises.

WORKSHOP TOPICS

Future Focus

This included career counseling based on psychometric tests and scenario planning. “What you achieve now determines what your life will be like in twenty years’ time” was stressed. Students were led to realize that there were “no more excuses!” No longer could they blame their parents, the school, or the government for their school and life performance.

Preferred Learning Style

Cedric has routinely lectured high school teachers on the four basic MBTI learning styles. The teachers appreciated that using this knowledge in the presentation of material would probably increase student learning capability. However, this was impossible in classes of over thirty students. They continued teaching in their own style and were happy when they managed to keep ahead in their preparation and marking. The *PAL* workshop developed the idea of teaching the student to adapt his or her style to the teachers, and this worked fairly well.

Four basic personality styles or types are identified by the MBTI instrument: NT (Intuitive Thinker), NF (Intuitive Feeler), SJ (Sensory Judger), and SP (Sensory Perceptive). These were combined with the Neurolinguistic Programming dominant perception concepts—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. The combinations were represented for students by a simple color-coded figure system of blue circles, pink triangles, yellow squares, etc. The young people responded enthusiastically to graphic representation of their differences and similarities and the knowledge that it was “OK to be different.” It was emphasized that this was the preferred starting style only. Effective individuals alter their style to suit the circumstances. However, the greatest advantage is to realize one’s own preferred style and thus work from strength, using the dominant hand as it were, to enhance the effectiveness of home study periods. This is a good point to note that knowing the temperament style of a person in any *Hemi-Sync* workshop seems to make it easier to put ideas across. NFs and NTs appear to respond more easily than the other two styles. Perhaps this phenomenon has been noted by other researchers. If so, data sharing is welcomed.

Hemi-Sync Tapes

The basic *PAL* two-tape pack was modified to include *Concentration* and *Catnapper*. Each student obtained an album for use at home. Workshop participants also processed *METAMUSIC Cloudscapes* and later selected H-PLUS Functions. The basic theory underlying Hemi-Sync was introduced and explained, and the students were encouraged to try out tapes in the class. This was made possible by a stereo headphone harness setup. The feeling of being in the forefront of technology generated excitement and enthusiasm. Follow-up showed that *Concentration* was used consistently by the whole group, and *Catnapper* was particularly appreciated by those leading hectic social lives.

One Hemi-Sync-mediated experience is noteworthy. The goal-setting exercise is considered a key workshop component. Few progress in life without a plan that can be stated, structured, and modified. Some students respond fairly easily to this exercise, while others find it almost impossible to look into the future. This ability does not appear to be linked to alpha-numeric intelligence, sex, or race. Observation indicates that it may well be influenced by temperament style. By the MBTI definition, intuitive thinkers and feelers (NTs and NFs) are easily able to conceive of the future. The sensory types (SPs and SJs) need to "have the facts" and are reluctant to guess or to fantasize about what may lie ahead. The pilot group, composed of NTs, NFs, and SJs, was asked to do the goal-setting exercise. Some struggled along as expected. Then, as an experiment, everyone was given headphones and allowed to listen to *Cloudscapes* while working. The result, after about five minutes, was dramatic. (Every single student became involved in the exercise with flair and imagination and brought forth reality-based ideas.) They even asked for extra time to complete their scenarios. This was a very small sample, but it suggests ways of using *METAMUSIC* tapes so all temperament types can participate in structured creativity exercises. This concept is being developed further in another project.

Study Methods

Descriptions of techniques from educational literature were collected. Those found to be effective were added to the repertoire. They included points and techniques such as the importance of balance in one's life, exercise, nutrition, spacing of review, mnemonics, exam tips, and Tony Buzan's Mind Maps. The last technique is such a wonderful way of collating and presenting data for recall that some time was spent on its practice. Once again, the aspect of learning style seemed pertinent. Only the NTs (Intuitive Thinkers) take naturally to Mind Maps. The other types have to be taught to adapt their style to the technique, and it becomes an effective study tool once it is mastered.

Personal Touch

The concept of “High Tech-High Touch” was borrowed from John Naisbitt’s *Megatrends*. High Tech-High Touch means that as the complexity of the technology in a person’s observable environment increases, the feeling/affection/nurturing aspects should keep pace. If not, problems may arise. In our urban society, this is applicable to groups and individuals. This idea was unobtrusively incorporated in the planning and implementation of the workshop. The atmosphere of all the sessions was kept “non-school” and informal. Maati made periodic phone calls to inquire about student progress. Special eats were always available during sessions, and each student’s individuality and self-esteem was accepted as a baseline.

ANALYSIS OF EXAM RESULTS

It would be good to report that all the students improved their results when compared to their peers who had not participated in the workshop, but it did not work out that way. The 1993 mid-year exam results showed that the *PAL* group did as poorly as the others when the results were compared to the first term marks. Usually the mid-year exams are set a good deal more stringently than the first term. If the group is split into NFs and NTs on the one hand and SJs on the other, then the NFs and NTs did improve compared to their peers. The SJs did not; they scored a good deal worse. The SJs tended to be much more skeptical of the whole process, although they reported making good use of *Concentration*. It is difficult to draw conclusions from such a small sample. Therefore, it is being followed up and larger samples are planned.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PAL WORKSHOPS

We realized, as has anyone dealing with the complexity of education, that no single intervention—even one as powerful as a workshop including Hemi-Sync tapes—is going to have an immediate, positive effect on exam results. There are just so many other factors involved. With the pilot group, exam tension and home stress linked to parental expectation seemed to play a significant negative part in the results. Those who were interested (the SJs did not respond) could come to our center to process certain *H-PLUS* Functions: *Attention*, *Imprint*, *Recall*, *Relax*, *Buy the Numbers*, and *Strong-Quick*. The last was added because of the ease with which its effect can be validated using a simple bathroom scale. Once students saw an increase in strength after using the *H-PLUS* Command, they were better able to accept that the other Functions would also work for them. The benefit of the *H-PLUS* Functions to this group of students was difficult to check. Plans are under way to restructure the presentation and monitor progress over a longer period.

Postscript

Many professional colleagues may have learned, from their own news media, about the difficulties now being experienced in South Africa. Apart from the damaging effects on the

economy, these turbulent times make the life of the serious student very difficult. Some schools have been used to express political views, both legitimate and opportunist. Teachers are subjected to "chalk down" protests, students boycott classes, others are intimidated, schools are vandalized, and the study-ethic has been seriously deprecated. Those who do not pass their exams shout, "Pass one, pass all," and get away with it!

One consequence of this turmoil has been the emergence of "distance learning" by correspondence rather than in a classroom/lecture hall. For both student and teacher, it is much safer by far! Technical developments in television tutoring and lectures on audiotape have encouraged this process. Students who are working at home, usually at tertiary-level studies, really want to work. They are the ones who need our support and they need Hemi-Sync. Any colleague wishing to offer advice and assistance may contact us at: Creative Processes Ltd., P.O. Box 2249, Cape Town 8000, South Africa.

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